

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

The Certificate of Occupancy will be issued after all corrections have been made and final inspections are approved. Typically, the Certificate of Occupancy can be picked up two days after notifying the Occupancy section of project completion. When complete, the certificate must be picked up by the applicant or his/her designated agent. Please note, certificates are not mailed.



Building Code Enforcement's Mission

Assuring safe and healthy living, recreational and work environments for people throughout the City of Houston by efficiently administering the building code and providing exceptional customer service.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Inspections

Occupancy/Life Safety	832-394-8880
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Plan Review

Commercial	832-394-8810
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One Stop	832-394-8820
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Other Important Phone Numbers

Taps & Meters	832-394-8888
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Planning & Development	832-394-8849
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Health Department	832-394-8848
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Building Code Enforcement General	832-394-9494
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Automated Inspection Request Line	713-222-9922
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Websites

Building Code Enforcement
<http://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/building-code-enforcement.html>

Permits/Inspections/Plan Review
<http://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/city-of-houston-permits/online-permits.html>

General Information
www.houstontx.gov/311

Public Works & Engineering Main Webpage
www.publicworks.houstontx.gov

CITY OF HOUSTON

PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING BUILDING CODE ENFORCEMENT

Minor Change of Use Program



This guide is to provide the qualifications and submittal requirements for projects that wish to utilize the Occupancy Inspection Minor Change of Use Program (for similar uses).

Occupancy Inspections
1002 Washington Avenue, Floor 1
Houston, TX 77002
(832) 394-8880
Office Hours 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

MINOR CHANGE OF USE

SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

The Building Code provides a specific classification for each building. This classification is known as an occupancy classification and is used to specify requirements relative to risks and hazards. When a business changes the “use” or “character” of a building, this generally requires a physical change to the building to meet minimum life safety provisions.

The code for most “Changes of Use” requires plans and permits to review very detailed requirements.

This program is established to:

- Provide a simplified compliance path for minor change of use or character for similar occupancies.
- Identify requirements to ensure the building meets the minimum code.

TYPE OF BUSINESSES ALLOWED

This program is limited to a change of use to a Group B, M or S occupancy, as defined in the Building Code and that do not exceed 5,000 square feet in area.

Group “B” Businesses (similar to)

- ☒ Offices (tax, architect, etc.)
- ☒ Barber and beauty shops (up to 3 bowls)
- ☒ Dry cleaners (drop off & pickup only)
- ☒ Training and skill development
- ☒ Internet cafés



Group “M” Mercantile

- ☒ Retail/wholesale stores



Group “S” Storage

- ☒ Low to moderate storage warehouse.

NOTE: No High Pile

RESTRICTIONS

The following uses, regardless of the classification, such as restaurants, high pile, or hazardous, do not qualify and must refer to the General Commercial Permit Process (Brochure CE - 1279).

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for a minor change of use, the applicant must complete an [Application for Occupancy Compliance Inspection](#) (Form CE-1045) and submit the supporting documentation.

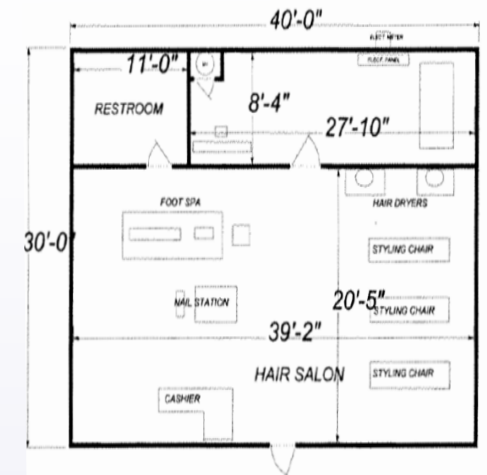
SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Approved floor plan
Deed Restriction Affidavit and Acknowledgement for Building Permit
Confirmation that this is not a residential building for a proposed commercial use.
Health certificate per health department regulations, food services. (if required)
Letters of Availability
Approved parking requirements from the planning department. (if required)

The following information must be included on the required floor plans.

- Page size limited to 8 1/2 “X 11” or 11” X 17”
- Proposed Occupancy

- Dimensions for all areas
- Exit doors with direction of swing
- Kitchens, bathrooms, storage areas
- Offices, warehouse areas
- Location of plumbing, electrical and mechanical equipment



FEES AND INSPECTIONS

Once the application and required documents have been received, the Building Code Enforcement staff will verify that the business is qualified for a Minor Change of Use inspection.

Fees will be determined once all documents are approved. The applicant will pay the required fees, and an inspection date will be scheduled.

If code discrepancies are noted, the applicant will receive an inspection report (structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing). Separate permits will be required to be purchased by the licensed individuals to make these corrections.

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